United Nations CEDAW/C/PAK/5

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Distr.: General
23 October 2018

Original: English
English, French and Spanish only

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Fifth periodic report submitted by Pakistan under article 18 of the Convention, due in 2017*

[Date received: 9 October 2018]

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

18-17657 (E) 011118

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Introduction

1. The Government of Pakistan (GoP) follows a progressive and well defined agenda for gender equality and women empowerment in the country. Guiding principles for the promotion and protection of women are embedded in provisions of the Constitution of Pakistan.

2. Since the 18th Constitutional Amendment, 2010, the main responsibility to implement National and International obligations lies with the Provincial Governments which are continuously undertaking steps to improve the lives of women and to fulfill Pakistan's national and international commitments.

3. In pursuance of Article 18 of the Convention, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan is pleased to present its Fifth Periodic Country Report to the UNCEDAW Committee prepared in line with harmonized guidelines of United Nations. The Report covers measures adopted by Pakistan to give effect to provisions of the Convention and progress made from March 2013 to March 2017.

Coping with Challenges

Natural Disasters and adverse impact of Climate Change

4. According to Global Climate Risk Index (2017) Pakistan ranks at 7th position among the most adversely affected countries by Climate Change. Despite having high vulnerability of future climatic changes, Pakistan is still among very low Greenhouse Gases (GHG) emitting countries.[1] Pakistan's vulnerability to natural disasters is characterized by earthquakes, floods, droughts, cyclones, landslides, sea hazards and a range of complex emergencies.[2] Repeated flooding has occurred in Pakistan since 2010[3] affecting all provinces. In 2013 Balochistan was hit by two powerful earthquakes destroying nearly 20,000 houses. In March and November 2014, Tharparkar district, Sindh was struck with a drought that affected some 260,000 people and caused famine in 5 districts.

5. As a developing country with its own, unique socio-economic and geo-political position, Pakistan has faced a myriad of challenges. Through the determination of its people and through political commitment, the country has been able to cope with and overcome numerous challenges.

6. To manage and mitigate natural disasters, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) is continuously working to develop and implement strategic plans to deal with emerging challenges. Gender remains cross cutting in these schemes. Provincial Disaster Management Authorities (PDMAs) have established Gender and Child Cells to cater to the needs of vulnerable population. Moreover, major initiatives undertaken include development of a Child Protection Strategy, establishment of better coordination mechanisms, SOPs for unaccompanied and missing children, training workshops on gender mainstreaming and awareness programs on problems faced by women, particularly in post disaster scenarios.

Counter terrorism efforts and ensuring safety and security of the people

7. Terrorism is a menace that has affected people all over the world. Pakistan has fought hard to curb terrorism and has lost many innocent lives in the struggle. During

[1] http://www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapters_17/16-Climate_change.pdf.
[2] http://www.ndma.gov.pk/publications/AR2011.pdf.
[3] http://www.ndma.gov.pk.

the last 16 years, the direct and indirect cost incurred by Pakistan due to incidents of terrorism amounts to US$ 123.13 billion equivalent to Rs. 10,373.93 billion.[4]

8. Pakistan has nevertheless achieved progressive and significant improvement in the country's overall security landscape in recent years as a result of law enforcement operations backed by comprehensive National Action Plan to counter terrorism. Women in Pakistan have also played an important role towards counter terrorism efforts i.e. as part of the special police units in fighting terrorism. Special resources have been diverted towards effective and inclusive law enforcement wherein women are also trained as first responders to terrorist attacks.

Preparation of Fifth Periodic Report

9. After presentation of 4th Periodic Report before UNCEDAW Committee, the Ministry of Human Rights (MOHR) printed and disseminated the report and Concluding Observations amongst all relevant federal and provincial government departments, academia, civil society organizations and mass media for information and necessary action.

10. After 18th Amendment, Provincial CEDAW Committees (PCC) were revitalized/reconstituted to ensure implementation of CEDAW at provincial level according to the priorities and requirements of each particular province.

11. Similarly, an Inter Provincial Ministerial Group (IPMG) has also been constituted to help the provinces harmonize their gender equality policies and legislations, and to encourage the sharing of best practices.

12. PCCs, IPMG, Treaty Implementation Cells (TICs), Provincial Women Development Departments (WDDs) and women Commissions play a significant role in monitoring implementation of the Convention and in providing relevant data on measures adopted throughout Pakistan.

13. For monitoring and reporting on treaty body recommendations, MOHR follows a systematic and institutionalized process. Matrices are designed and circulated among key line Federal Ministries and Provincial Departments for furnishing of detailed information.

14. MOHR also holds meetings at provincial headquarters wherein all relevant departments are sensitized regarding implementation and reporting of the Convention. Meetings are also held with Civil Society Organizations and NGOs to discuss and share measures taken in collaboration with federal and provincial governments.

15. A national level consultation was also held at Islamabad to share the draft report with all relevant federal and provincial stakeholders and CSOs to seek their comments/ suggestions and improvements.

16. The report has been finalized in close collaboration with Ministry of Foreign Affairs and is an outcome of broad-based, inclusive and participatory consultative process.

[4] http://www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapters_17/Annex_IV_War.pdf.

Part One

Response to the Concluding Observations

17. In line with concluding observations, an interim report on Article 22 and 28 was submitted by Pakistan in 2015 after following a comprehensive consultative process. In this Section, implementation of Convention and further updates on paragraph 22 and 28 are detailed.

Paragraph 9 and 10: Withdrawal of declaration upon accession to the Convention

18. In respect to withdrawal of Declaration, the Federal Governmen. consulted relevant stakeholders; however, consensus is yet to be reached. The Declaration has not however affected the legislative process and the various Acts have already been amended by federal and provincial assemblies to protect the socio-economic and legal rights of women.

Paragraph 11 and 12: Devolution of powers

19. Following the 18th Constitutional Amendment, 18 Federal Ministries and 47 subjects including women rights were devolved to the provinces thus mandating each province to implement international conventions within their respective policy and legislative frameworks.

20. MOHR has regional offices in all four provincial capitals and they work in close cooperation with key line departments in the provinces including the Women's Development Departments and Commissions.

21. An Inter Provincial Ministerial Group (IPMG) comprising Ministers and Secretaries of Provincial Women Development Departments, Chairpersons, National and Provincial Commissions and relevant stakeholders including MOHR was constituted in 2010. Thirteen meetings have been held on periodic basis to agree on key priorities for gender equality in line with international commitments.

22. In addition, National and Provincial Treaty Implementation Cells (TICs) and Provincial CEDAW Committee are effectively implementing the Convention by developing standardized implementation protocols. In addition to sharing of best practices among provincial governments, implementation issues and challenges are also discussed and strategic measures proposed.

23. National and Provincial Commissions on Status of Women work in close collaboration and act as oversight bodies to suggest policy, legal and administrative measures to empower women and to remove barriers of gender discrimination.

Paragraph 13 and 14 Women and Girls affected by Disasters

24. Any proclamations of emergency in Pakistan cannot abrogate the fundamental rights of its citizens and this principle has remained central to the country's governance. In 1999, a ruling of the court validated the proclamation of Emergency, but declared the suspension of fundamental rights as unjustified.[5]

25. The Government of Pakistan cognizant of the challenges faced by women and girls has taken substantive measures including provision of health services, education, temporary/interim food and shelters, psychological counseling, legal aid as well as skill building/vocational trainings to earn their livelihoods and easy access to market,

[5] Farooq Ahmad Leghari vs. Federation of Pakistan, PLD 1999 SC 57.

being implemented through public-private partnerships. Details are provided in the relevant sections.

26. A comprehensive Policy Guidelines for vulnerable groups in disasters has also been launched by the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) to address needs and concerns of women, children, persons with disabilities, and the elderly (gender disaggregated), during disasters. The NDMA is fully represented and functional at all Federal, Provincial and district levels.

27. The 'Let Girls Learn project' is a $70m project of government partnership with international donors [6] to ensure girl-child education for temporarily displaced communities. The program focuses on education of adolescent girls across Pakistan with one of its key pillars being to bridge the schooling gap in disaster-affected Areas. This is being accomplished through the construction and rehabilitation of schools and providing access to basic education.

28. The Government in collaboration with SMEDA [7] is providing vocational trainings for women in camps and their products are provided market access through craft exhibitions. Special trained women psychologists have also been deputed to counsel women and adolescents for post disaster trauma.

29. The Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) also addresses poverty of women in far-flung areas. "Sisters in Success" is a BISP initiative to encourage idea generation to motivate the underprivileged women to break the shackles of poverty and emerge empowered in true sense. According to an Impact Evaluation Study conducted by the Oxford Policy Management in 2016, BISP has changed the way women are viewed in the household.[8] Out of 5.2 million BISP beneficiaries, 157633 belong to Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA). Currently, the BISP is committed to update National Socio Economic Registry (NSER) that covers whole of the country. The pilot project aims at assessing women in 15 districts (including all regions of FATA, Turbat) and Mohmand Agency as well as Charsada district of KPK. A short brief on the functions, allocations and budgetary aspects of BISP is attached at Annexure I.

30. Another major initiative includes issuance of Computerized National Identity Cards (CNICs) for women during displacement. This initiative has assisted women to access relief such as food, non-food items, health care and education. A total of 2200 female from KPK and FATA have so far benefitted from these emergency CNICs.

31. The government also extends support to local civil society organizations in taking various measures to help temporarily displaced women.

Paragraph 16 (d)

32. Given the fact that Jirgas and Panchayats are embedded in the socio-cultural system, these are being transformed and regulated to work as formal alternate dispute mechanisms in order to support the existing judicial system.

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[6] This is being carried-out with support from the US Agency for International Development (USAID).

[7] Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA).

[8] A third round impact evaluation analysis was conducted in 2016 to assess the impact of BISP on beneficiaries against key objectives of the program: poverty reduction, women's empowerment, improved household and child nutrition, and increased asset retention. A quasi-experimental method was used, based on a comparison between a treatment group of beneficiaries of BISP against a control group of households' non-beneficiaries of BISP but just above the BISP threshold scorecard (Oxford Policy Management, 2016). This followed the second round evaluation impact analysis conducted in 2015.

33. National Assembly in February passed "The Alternate Dispute Resolution Bill, 2017" to deal with both civil and criminal cases presented by the Federal Ministry of Law and Justice. The system will be compulsorily applicable to twenty-three types of cases and components of conciliation, arbitration and Panchayat have also been included.

34. In the Punjab Local Government Act, 2013 and Amendment Act, 2015 (PLGA),[9] the Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanism has been introduced through local councils called Panchayats in Villages and Musalihat Anjumans (MAs) for amicable settlements of disputes in cities. MAs and Panchayats[10] have authority to resolve civil[11] or compoundable[12] criminal offences among residents of an area as referred to them by individuals, courts or local police. Each Panchayat or MA is mandated to have at least 2 female members out of 9 members. Furthermore, District Courts closely monitor the working of Panchayats or MAs and decisions can be appealed in Court.[13] The Panchayats and MAs provide petitioners with speedy, equitable and relatively inexpensive mediation and conflict resolution forums. This ADR mechanism is also under consideration in other provinces.

Paragraph 17 and 18: National Machinery for advancement of women

35. National Commission on Status of Women (NCSW) is an independent statutory body that has complete financial and human resource independence and autonomy. NCSW hires its own functionaries independently and its budgetary allocations are granted by the Ministry of Finance as per its own requirements. Similarly, Provincial Commissions on the Status of Women access required budgets for their respective programs and plans. The initiatives undertaken by the NCSW and PCSWs are given in relevant sections of the report. In addition, Commissions also access funds from National and International donors. The year wise break-up of financial allocations to the Commissions are provided in Annexure II.

36. The WDDs at provincial level are also working as independent government departments for women empowerment in-line with their respective prioritized policies, programs and plans. They undertake legislative, policy measures and many programmes are initiated in public-private partnerships.

Paragraph 19 and 20: Temporary special measures

37. A 10% reserved quota for women in the Civil Services is being maintained and women also compete on general seats as well. Currently, 40% of young officers at Civil Services Academy are women. Recently Sindh Province enhanced women's employment quota to 15 %. Similarly, the Punjab Fair Representation of Women Act 2014 requires the Punjab Public Service Commission to reserve quota of 15% for

[9] Chapter XII (sections 96–99) of the Punjab Local Government Act of 2013 provide for the functions, composition and procedure for dispute resolution to be adopted by Panchayats and Musalihat Anjumans.

[10] MA and Panchayats are panels of 9 members, including at least 2 women, who are nominated by members of the Local Government, but cannot consist of these members. Members must be known to be nonpolitical, impartial and honest members of the community.

[11] Bye-laws for operation of MAs and Panchayat will be framed by Government of Punjab. Civil disputes that can be resolved by MAs and Panchayat will be categorized and defined in the bye-laws, along with provision for trainings.

[12] Non-compoundable offences include offences that cannot be resolved through monetary or other settlements between the parties. A comprehensive list of non-compoundable offences, including terrorism, murder and rape, is provided in the Pakistan Penal Code.

[13] If a case is referred to the MA or Panchayat by the Court, the Court will accordingly define terms of reference for resolution of dispute, procedure for resolution, time period within which the dispute must be settled, contents of case report to be submitted to the Court, and any other relevant matters.

women in all public-sector jobs. Regarding representation of 33% women in local governments, the Women Commissions and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are pursuing the matter within their respective provinces.

38. The district governments, women commissions and other relevant organizations closely monitored Local Government Elections, 2015 to identify any infringement of the political rights of women. Reports by various independent election monitoring organizations generally found that the Election Commission of Pakistan's Code of Conduct was appropriately followed and overall female participation had increased. Furthermore, Section 9 of Election Bill 2017 has clarified that in cases of less than 10% women voter turnout in any constituency, the Commission may declare polling void in that area.

Paragraph 25 and 26 — Participation in political and public life.

39. Women parliamentarians in the 13th National Assembly (2013–2018) have demonstrated strong presence in the House. Data from legislative business of both Houses shows that from 2016–2017, percentage of women contribution to parliamentary business was remarkably high in the National Assembly where nearly two thirds (62%) business was originated by women individually and three percent in collaboration with their male colleagues. In the Senate, women sponsored 13 percent parliamentary business individually and two percent jointly. The current level of women's representation in the national and provincial legislatures of Pakistan is amongst the top in the region.

40. The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) developed a strategic Plan 2014–17 to promote women's participation in politics wherein "gender in electoral processes and the ECP" is a strategic goal. The ECP also approved the Gender Mainstreaming Strategy in 2013 as result of a lower women voters' turnout in the General Elections of 2013.

41. A "Gender and Disability Electoral Working Group" has also been constituted in the ECP Secretariat at the National, Provincial and local levels. The group consists of key stakeholders from the public sector as well as the civil society and it has been actively deliberating on lessons learned and recommendations made post 2013 elections.[14]

42. Furthermore, electoral reforms to encourage women to contest in general elections are being introduced by the ECP. After intensive consultations with key stakeholders, the ECP has proposed 15% quota for women in the allocation of party tickets in general elections. The recommendation has been forwarded to the Electoral Reform Committee of the Parliament.

43. The ECP is also encouraging Inclusive Voter Education, especially at the grass root level to ensure optimum participation of women in the 2018 elections. Gender mainstreamed guidelines for ECP staff for effective recording of gender disaggregated results has been designed. Gender Sensitization Sessions are being conducted for the security and polling personnel deputed at polling stations.

Paragraph no 38: Marriage and Family Relations

44. The Government of Pakistan is taking necessary legislative and policy measures to give equitable rights to minority communities in Pakistan.

45. Landmark Hindu Marriage Act, 2017 has been enacted by Parliament of Pakistan on 17th March 2017 which was introduced by MOHR. The Act focuses on resolving issues like provision of basic documentation of marital status, inheritance

[14] http://ecp.gov.pk/Press%20ReleaseStrategic%20Plan%202014-18-pdf.

from a deceased husband, re-marrying, divorce, separation or adoption by prescribing a registration mechanism and imposes penalties if its provisions are violated. The Act is applicable to the extent of Islamabad, the Capital Territory, Provinces of Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. Sindh Assembly enacted Hindu Marriage Act in 2016.

46. Responses to the remaining concluding observations have been reported in Section II of this report within each respective Article of the Convention.

Part Two

Responses to the Articles of the Convention

Article 1: Definition of Discrimination against Women

47. The Government of Pakistan reaffirms its commitment to reduce and eliminate all forms of discrimination in line with provisions of the Constitution of Pakistan. The principles of equality and non-discrimination are enshrined in the Constitution. The courts, in many instances, have upheld adoption of special measures as Constitutional for the inclusion of women in employment sector, enrollment in educational institutions, and participation in political setups on quota.[15]

48. Article 25 of the Constitution states that there shall be no discrimination on the basis of sex. The term 'Discrimination' as defined in the CEDAW is considered by the courts of law and other organizations whenever the question of defining discrimination arises.[16] The Constitution of Pakistan provides fundamental rights which include freedom of speech, thought, information, religion, freedom of association, press and assembly which support the equal treatment of all, irrespective of gender.

Article 2: Obligation to Eliminate Discrimination

49. Embedded in the Constitution, the principle of non-discrimination encompasses all vulnerable groups including women, as already mentioned in previous reports. A number of legislative, policy and programmatic measures have been taken at the national and provincial level to effectively implement its commitments and to promote gender equality, women empowerment and fundamental human rights in the country. Implementation mechanisms are now broad-based and have been institutionalized. A brief list of legislations enacted by Federal and Provincial Governments, since 2013, to end discrimination against women is attached at Annexure III.

50. The Parliament of Pakistan has been passing resolutions to reaffirm the commitment to end discrimination and violence against women on annual basis to commemorate international and national women's days. These resolutions urge the federal and provincial governments to facilitate equal opportunities, ensure safety and welfare of women, pursue policies, promote meaningful and significant participation of women in every aspect of public life. From 2016–2017, women members sponsored 30 resolutions individually and 14 jointly in the National Assembly with their male/female counterparts, of which 18 were adopted by the House. Similarly,

[15] Lahore High Court Lahore. W.P. No. 20018 of 2012. Nazar Elahi vs. The Government of Punjab. (2012).

[16] Judgment No 1/K of 2006: Judgment Justice Haziqul Khairi C.J. [Citizenship Rights]; ALSO See: 2016. Lahore High Court, Multan Bench, Multan. Writ Petition No.5939 of 2006. Ms. Rukhsana Bibi, etc. vs. Government of Pakistan, etc.

eight resolutions were tabled by women lawmakers individually and five jointly in the Upper House. Of these 10 were adopted.[17]

51. The Courts in Pakistan have always upheld Constitutional provisions. In the judgment order of Nazar Elahi vs. the Government of Punjab etc. (2012),[18] the Lahore High Court (LHC) dismissed a petition on the question of discrimination raised by the petitioner regarding age relaxation for female candidates.

52. Vision 2025 focuses on ending discriminations faced by women and providing them an enabling environment to develop their full potential and share the benefits of prosperity and social development. Strategy and policy frameworks have been outlined to enable women to be partners in community and national life.

53. Similarly, the 11th Five year Plan 2013–18 is a comprehensive document that sets out guiding principles and implementation strategies for national development.[19] An amount of Rs. 2.7 billion has been proposed for gender and women empowerment in the Plan (Breakdown of the budget is available in Annexure II) The key aims of the Plan are to ensure women's right to ownership of movable and immovable assets, provide unimpeded access to legal, religious and social rights and resources, protect their mobility and livelihood, especially in backward areas, urgent redressal against unjust and illegal patriarchal customs, such as honour killing and domestic violence and recognition of women's contribution in socio-economic development, promotion of additional benefits in term of flexible working hours, day-care facilities, leave etc.

Article 3: Implementation of the Convention through all available means

54. Pakistan is firmly committed to the promotion and protection of women's rights and has a free media, independent judiciary and a vibrant civil society — all of which play an important role in strengthening democracy.

55. A National Action Plan for Human Rights was developed by MOHR through extensive consultations with stakeholders and approved in February 2016 at a cost of PKR. 750 Million. The plan envisages activities at federal and provincial levels for promotion and protection of human rights with special focus on women rights. An amount of Rs. 400 million has been allocated for human rights education, sensitization, awareness raising, research and communication; Rs. 250.0 million for establishment of a human rights institute. It broadly encompasses six thematic areas including Policy and Legal Reforms, Implementing Key Human Rights Priorities (Protection of Women), Cross-cutting Interventions for Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, International Treaty Implementation, Institutional Interventions and Implementation and Monitoring Mechanism (Prevention of Human Rights Violations and Redressal Mechanisms).

56. In compliance with thematic area I, the policy works to expedite pending legislation. Accordingly, the MOHR presented Hindu Marriage Bill in the National Assembly and pursued the passage of anti-rape and anti-honour killing Bills.

57. In compliance with thematic area II outcome 3, a fund for free legal aid to poor victims of human rights violations has been set up at the MOHR. An endowment Fund of PKR. 100 million has been allocated by the Prime Minister for free legal aid to poor women. SOPs include the set-up of district committees headed by a District & Sessions judge and disbursement of money by MOHR.

[17] www.fafen.org I www.openparliament.pk.

[18] Lahore High Court Lahore. W.P. No. 20018 of 2012. Nazar Elahi vs. The Government of Punjab. (2012).

[19] Chapter 10: Gender and Women Empowerment, 11th five year plan of the GoP.

58. MOHR has also set up Women in Distress and Detention Fund to provide rehabilitation to women released from incarceration and shelters/crisis centers. Summary for amendment in Section 6 of the Fund is under consideration by Cabinet Division. An amount of PKR. 46 Million is available with MOHR for disbursement. Furthermore, the MOHR is also operating a Human Rights Relief and Revolving Fund to provide immediate financial assistance of up to PKR 50,000 to deserving and needy women. Financial assistance of PKR. 6.22 million has been provided to 358 victims during last four years including women and children, minorities and senior citizens including Persons with Disabilities (PWDs). Diyat, Arsh and Daman Fund are operational as well.

59. The MOHR also maintains a 24-hour legal aid helpline (1099) which operates throughout Pakistan and offers legal advice, redressal and referral mechanism. Some 82,000 calls have been received at the Helpline so far.

60. MOHR is also developing a legal and policy framework for the implementation of Human Rights commitments. Under Open Government Partnership, the MOHR is also developing "National Guidelines on Citizen Engagement in Policy Development and Evaluation". These Guidelines shall provide a flexible framework for creating dialogue between government departments and civil society.

61. National and provincial Task Forces to monitor implementation of Action Plan for Human Rights have been constituted under the Chairmanships of the Federal and Provincial Ministers for Human Rights. These task forces comprise Parliamentarians, representatives of relevant Federal Ministries and Provincial Departments.

62. NCSW monitored the General Elections, 2013, developed indicators for gender based violence and conducted studies to review gender discriminatory laws.

63. The Punjab Provincial Commission on the Status of Women established in 2014 facilitates and monitors implementation of Pakistan's international commitments, as well as instances of violation of women's rights. It has authority to solicit required information from Government Departments. Similarly, the Provincial Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW) was established by the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in 2009 to examine government policies and projects for women empowerment, gender equality, and to review laws and serve as a monitoring body for various gender programs. The Commission has now been given financial autonomy under Women Empowerment Policy, 2015. Sindh Commission on the Status of Women Act, 2015 strengthens the monitoring of women development framework; facilitates work on the promotion of socio-economic, political and legal rights of women.

64. As mentioned at Paragraph 24, Provincial CEDAW implementation Committees and Treaty Implementation Cells (TICs) at the national and provincial levels monitor the implementation of the Convention.

65. An independent National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR) has also been established through an Act of the Parliament in 2015. It works with powers of a civil court to address human rights violations and to advise Government on human rights issues and policies. At present 5 out of 9 members are women.

66. Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Women Empowerment Policy Framework, 2015 mainstreams gender issues in development across public and private sectors. The framework is based on the principles of non-discrimination and gender equity. It prioritizes needs of poor women in rural as well as urban areas and recognizes their value in economic, social and political development etc.

67. Women Empowerment Policy was launched by Government of Sindh in 2013 to promote gender equality. Sindh Family Planning Policy aims at achieving universal access to safe and quality reproductive health/family planning services by 2020.

68. The Government of Balochistan is in process of developing a gender policy in collaboration with key line departments and stakeholders.

69. The Government of Punjab introduced Punjab Women Empowerment Package 2012 and initiatives for 2014 and 2016. The provincial Women Development Departments are playing an important role in mainstreaming gender equality across policies, laws and programs. They are coordinating and monitoring execution of provincial policies on gender reforms and women development; collection of quantitative and qualitative data on the status of women, building partnerships with key line departments and civil society organizations to facilitate women's access to legal and justice systems.

Article 4: Special Measures / affirmative actions

70. Article 34 of the Constitution states that "Steps shall be taken to ensure full participation of women in all spheres of National life".

71. Since the 18th Constitutional Amendment, the provincial governments are taking policy, legislative and administrative measures for protection and promotion of women rights as per requirement of their province.

72. Protection against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act (2010) is implemented all over Pakistan. A Code of conduct has been displayed in all Government departments and Inquiry Committees have been constituted. Offices of the Ombudsman for Harassment have been established at national and provincial levels. Since 2011, Federal Ombudsman Secretariat, Islamabad has received 480 complaints out of which 311 were related to harassment. Some 462 complaints have been disposed of by the Secretariat after completing all codal formalities while 20 are under process.

73. In addition, Twenty (20) Women Police Stations have also been established in different cities all over the country. Furthermore, Women Help desks and complaint cells have been established at large number of police stations throughout Pakistan to provide relief to women who feel reluctant to approach male dominated police stations.

74. As mentioned at para 56, MOHR is implementing a National Action Plan on Human Rights with special focus on women rights. Policy Framework for promotion and protection of human rights has also been drafted which includes promotion and protection of women rights as one of its key priority areas.

75. National Policy on Ending Violence against Women has been finalized to address all forms of discrimination and violence against women. It comprises four basic components which includes prevention, response, protection and rehabilitation.

76. Similarly, a National Women Empowerment Package is under consideration by the Office of the Prime Minister which comprises of Legal Reforms, facilitation of services such as day care centers, age relaxation, bank loans, availability of shelters, education, health facilities and political empowerment etc.

77. Designing and execution of Men Engage Model Program to eliminate Gender Based Violence (GBV) also falls under the ambit of MOHR's National Action Plan. It aims at engaging men to challenge discriminatory norms and stereotypes that prevent women's participation in all spheres of life. A national survey on Men's perceptions towards GBV has been completed in 10 districts of the country and is to be replicated in other districts as well.

78 Family Protection & Rehabilitation Centre for Women (FPRCW), Islamabad works under the MOHR and provides counseling and legal/medical aid/help to women. A set of SOPs have been developed to ensure effective implementation of FPRCW objectives and services. Services available at the Centre include psycho-social, and legal counseling, individual & group therapy to overcome depression and trauma, medical and legal aid, outreach visits, reconciliation, reintegration and social rehabilitation. The Centre also provides temporary accommodation and food, basic education, professional vocational training. It also runs its own Toll free helpline service (111-12-13-14).

79. To facilitate working women, the MOHR also runs a working women hostel at Islamabad. Two more hostels will also be constructed soon in Islamabad. Action Plan on Human Rights also calls for establishment of new Crisis Centers for Women and strengthening of existing centers at district level in collaboration with Civil Society Organizations.

80. Extensive and substantive trainings on women rights and CEDAW are being imparted to judicial officers at the federal, provincial and district levels. The MOHR is undertaking extensive training of prosecutors and court officials on women specific laws through Gender Equity Program in 12 districts of the country. The federal and provincial judicial academies have also held gender sensitization trainings for lawyers.

81. In Balochistan, three Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Centres for Women (SBBCW) are functional at Sibi, Khuzdar, and Quetta and three more centres are being established at Ketch, Loralai, and Naseerabad districts. In addition, Dar-ul-Aman shelters are also facilitating hundreds of women each year. Besides, a 50-bed old home for women is also under construction in Balochistan.

82. Similarly, the government of Sindh has established Women Complaint Centres (WCC) and Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Centre for Women through which, during last two years, more than five hundred victims of domestic violence and honor killing rape, acid throwing, child custody and dissolution of marriage have been given legal aid and socio-psychological counseling. They have also provided 154 women with Psycho-social counseling in cases of VAW, 150 women received psycho-therapeutic counseling, 64 received legal counseling and 27 received free legal aid. Besides Seven complaint cells also respond to victims of gender-based violence. In addition, Safe homes and protection centres have also been established at district level under the supervision of the Deputy Commissioners of the districts, to provide shelter and relief to women victims of violence.

83. For women's economic empowerment, the Sindh Home Based Workers Policy (HBWP) aims to protect and promote rights and benefits of home-based workers. Under the HBWP, home based workers are classified and their health and wage rights protected under relevant Labour Laws. Similarly in 2013, Government of Sindh also initiated a pilot project for Women Glass Bangle Home based Workers to register Women Glass Bangle Home Workers in Hyderabad. The WDD, Sindh has also designed a model GRAP (Gender Reforms Action Plan) to promote processes that lead towards equal participation of women at all levels of governance laying the foundation for permanent gender equality in society.

84. The Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has also established four Female Shelter Homes in district Peshawar, Mardan, Swat and Abbottabad while two more shelter homes in Haripur and Mansehra are also being made functional. Residents are provided with food, clothes, vocational and religious education. Besides, trainings for shelter homes, staff are regularly conducted. Similarly, nine Welfare Homes for destitute & orphan children are also operational. There are two Welfare Homes for Female Children in district Nowshehra and Malakand at Batkhela which provide food,

clothes, vocational training and education. Moreover, some 900 survivors of GBV have been provided free psycho-social support by the Police and District Administration in Peshawar city.

85. The Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has initiated a Toll Free Helpline for reporting victims of Gender Based Violence with women in a culture of male dominance in December 2016.

86. The Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa also initiated GRAP Phase-II Project in Annual Development Plan 2014–15 to promote gender enabling environment and to sensitize public sector departments to include Gender Equity in their respective programs. The provincial government also provides hostel facilities to working women. Hostels are functional in Peshawar, Mardan and Abbottabad and this facility will also be extended to other districts of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on need basis. Besides, three flats are designated bachelor hostels for 12 female officers, six flats comprising one complete block has been reserved for women. Moreover, the first ever Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Working Women's Union has been established. Trainings on labor laws, health, safety and unionization are being conducted for working women, especially for home based, domestic and factory workers.

87. Similarly transport facilities are being provided to number of female officers at government and private offices. To access public transport, easy seats and compartments in metros, public buses and minibuses on intercity and intra-city routes have been reserved for women across Pakistan.

88. In Punjab, women survivors of violence are provided with shelter, welfare and rehabilitation services in women's shelters (Darulamans) in all 36 districts. A systematic research on shelter homes by the PCSW shows marked improvement in the services being delivered by these Darulamans, including legal, health and psychological services.

89. Help desks for women have been established at 696 police stations of Punjab. The Punjab Police has also instituted a robust complaints management system with SMS reporting on #:8787, telephone complaints at #: 15, rescue services at #: 1122 and reporting of terrorism-related complaints at #: 0800-111-111. Through this highly interactive system, the complainant can view the progress of his/her complaint online and send feedback online or through SMS.

90. In 2015, the Punjab Commission on the Status of Women developed a comprehensive Gender Management Information System (GMIS), the first ever system in the country. The system provides gender disaggregated data on approximately 250 indicators encompassing key aspects of women's lives. The system is updated periodically with the objective of strengthening institutional response to women issues.[20] The National Commission on the Status of Women is also in the process of developing a GMIS at national level as well as the model is being replicated by other provinces.

91. In January, 2017 the Government of Punjab launched a 'Women Safety Smart-phone App' Project. The user- friendly App offers a one button access to the PCSW's helpline (1043). It is a joint venture of the Special Monitoring Unit (SMU) in the office of the Chief Minister of Punjab, the Punjab Safe Cities Authority and the Punjab Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW). This initiative is part of the SMU's 'Women-on-Wheels' campaign that aims to prevent and combat harassment or any form of violence against women. It facilitates women's access to Police Integrated Command, Control and Communication (PPIC3) officials to notify them about any form of harassment that they might be facing at the time along with tracking

[20] gmis.gop.pk.

their exact geographic location. Trained teams of first responder are ready to be dispatched immediately to tackle the situation.

92. Punjab Women's Helpline provides information and referral services and lodges complaints of denial of women's rights.

93. Punjab has taken initiatives to implement the Prevention of Anti-Women Practices Act 2011 (Criminal Law (Third Amendment) Act 2011) and as per Punjab Women's Helpline, denial of inheritance is among the top 3 complaints.

94. Gender Sensitization trainings of Judges in Punjab are a regular features. From 2012 to 2015, 7 comprehensive trainings conducted for Judges, which were attended by 184 female and 238 male. The Punjab Bar Council has 8393 registered female advocates which is 12% of the total, a significant increase over the years.[21] Out of the 8,393 registered female advocates, 2,082 (24%) are licensed to appear before the High Court. Punjab Bar Council's Legal Aid Society provides legal aid to marginalized men and women and has 774 registered Advocates, including 49 women.

95. The Punjab Prisons Departments also impart skills, trainings and literacy/education programs to women prisoners. Some 55 skills development trainings were provided to 648 women prisoners in 2015; 566 women were given basic education and 280 women were referred for legal aid facilities at Punjab. Trainings at Vocational training centers, prisons and establishment of Display Centers and Exhibitions of products of Home Based Workers are regular features all over Pakistan.

96. The National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) has established a complaint and redressal mechanism. It has tracked cases of acid crimes and oversees the implementation of Criminal Law (Second) Amendment Act 2011. The Commission has advocated a comprehensive Acid Crimes Law campaign in collaboration with Acid Survivors Foundation. Pakistan Women Media Complaints Cell (PWMCC) is being launched to promote and ensure gender responsiveness with media houses in collaboration between NCSW and UKs Research Centre. Moreover, Commission is in process of developing a monitoring system to monitor implementation of Sindh Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2014. Besides, a National Baseline Survey is being developed to establish area specific crimes against women. This will help in future monitoring of cases of violence against women. Commission also facilitated and developed indicators for CEDAW interim report on paragraph 22 and 28 of the Concluding Observations of UNCEDAW Committee. NCSW has also conducted various studies to review existing legal framework in the context of discrimination against women and formulated recommendations for amendment in laws. The major studies include review of Qisas and Diyat Laws, Jirga Bill to criminalize unlawful assembly and Fair Representation of Women Bill to have 33% representation in different government departments, bodies and boards.

97. The wide ranging legislative, institutional and administrative measure adopted by the Federal and Provincial Governments to combat violence against women have resulted into improved reporting, data gathering, documentation, and speedy redressal of the such cases. The detailed statistics are provided at Annexure IV.

Article 5: Sex Role Stereotyping and Prejudice

98. Mass media plays a unique and important role in shaping societal norms and values. Pakistan has an open, independent and modern media. Today Pakistan has over 50 privately owned TV channels, 170 FM radio stations, and more than 250

[21] Punjab Bar Council has a total of 70,032 registered Advocates, out of which only 8,393 (approximately 12%) are women.

newspaper publications. In addition, 80 million use internet and approximately 138 million use mobiles. Women play a key role in media. Many key TV anchors of popular programs are women. Women actively participate in talk shows highlighting societal problems and thus help build a gender sensitive narrative for all national policies. Pakistani TV dramas shoulder a big responsibility in speaking out against existing discriminatory norms. Today's dramas focus on issues such as; pre-marital and post-marital situations, conditions of both domestic and working women, gender based violence etc.

99. To raise awareness about women's rights and to discuss issues of women at national and provincial level, special efforts are made to commemorate international and national days on media by telecasting special shows which include International and national Women Day, Mother's Day, Girl Child Day, Int. Human Rights Day, 16 days of Activism to end violence against women and National Working Women Day.

100. MOHR also imparts trainings and raises awareness at schools and universities through sensitization seminars, workshops, symposiums and consultative meetings on a regular basis.

101. Federal and provincial Governments are reviewing existing curricula to address negative stereotyping of women and to ensure that negative assumptions don't limit women's choices and opportunities. School curricula of KP and Punjab have already been revised to portray true potential of girls and women in all spheres of life.

102. One of the landmarks shows titled "Qanoon bolta hai" is being telecast on Pakistan Television (PTV) to provide legal awareness to women under the supervision of highly qualified lawyers. Moreover, Pakistan Television has dedicated 30% of its time to gender based advocacy through advertisements, sit-coms/dramas and talk shows.

103. Private Television and Radio channels also broadcast special programmes in varied languages to discourage parochial, racial, tribal, sectarian and prejudice attitude among citizens. Awareness programmes on different subjects including law, economic, social, cultural rights with different participants; social activists, scholars, educationists, advocates, law makers and journalists are broadcast in local languages to give people a better understanding of their rights. Moreover, advertisements regarding family laws, prevention of child and forced marriage, women right, birth registration processes and sexual harassment at workplace run on public and private media channels.

104. Women from all over Pakistan are now entering non-traditional professions and contributing in bringing prosperity. Some notable women who joined non-traditional professional are Dr. Meher Taj Roghani and Rahila Durrani, 1st Female Speakers of KP and Balochistan Assemblies, Hadiqa Bashir, winner of Mohammad Ali Humanitarian Award, Saira Batool, 1st female Air force pilot from Balochistan, Lt ZakiaJamali; 1st commissioned Naval Officer from Balochistan, Ayesha Farooq; 1st female war fighter pilot, Sharmeen Obaid; Oscar winner, ShaziaParveen, 1st fire fighter, Shain Akhtar; 1st professional female truck driver, Rasheen Khan; Master scuba diver/teacher, Ameena Sayed; recipient of Order of the British Empire (OBE) and Chevalier des Arts et Lettres, Naseem Hameed; Track runner 'fastest woman in S. Asia', Rafia Qasim Baig; 1st female member of the Bomb Disposal Unit (BDU), Tabassum Adnan; activist & founder of 1st women's Jirga and Raheela Zarmeen; 1st men's football coach.

Article 6: Sexual Exploitation of Women

105. Human trafficking is prohibited in line with the Constitution as well as Prevention and Control of Trafficking Ordinance, 2002. Federal Investigating

Agency (FIA) takes cognizance of crimes related to international trafficking in collaboration with relevant authorities. Besides, section 369 (A), 370 and 371 of the PPC deal with the internal trafficking and falls under the jurisdiction of police at federal and provincial level.

106. There are also check-posts of Law Enforcement Agencies (LEA) at airports, dry ports as well as at other entry and exit points to check valid travel documents of persons entering and leaving the country. Additionally, National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) has also conducted stringent screening exercise to block illegal National Identity Cards. The victims of trafficking are also assisted in returning to their countries of origin after investigation.

107. Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children Bill, 2016 and Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air Bill, 2016 have been reviewed from the women's perspective and under consideration by relevant authorities.

Article 7: Elimination of Discrimination in Political and Public Life

108. Article 34 of the Constitution emphasizes Full participation of women in national life and states that "Steps shall be taken to ensure full participation of women in all spheres of national life".

109. Women as citizen of Pakistan have the same Constitutional rights and are free to compete for general elections and to be elected to any public office at the national, provincial and local levels. They have liberty to exercise their right to vote in all elections. They are also contesting elections directly as well as through women's reserves quota.

110. National and Provincial Women Parliamentary Caucuses are performing key role in law-making and approval of budgets; participating in discussions on women specific issues and directly and indirectly influencing policies that effect women development and empowerment.

111. In General Election, 2013, women occupied 60 reserved seats out of a total of 342 seats in the National Assembly. Moreover, 9 women were elected on general seats and a woman on minority seat thus making the total number to 70 seats. In the Senate, 17% quota is also applied and the number of women Senators is 19 in the House out of 104.

112. In the previous Federal Cabinet, one Federal Minister and 2 Ministers of State and five Parliamentary Secretaries were women. In the Senate, two Standing Committees are chaired by Women Senators including the Functional Committee on Human Rights.

113. There are also several women in public sector, including Federal Secretaries of Foreign Affair Division, Human Rights Division, Capital Administration & Development Division (CADD), BISP and other departments.

114. At the previous provincial Assemblies, the 17% reserved quota is also applicable. There are 13 women MPAs including one from minority in Balochistan Assembly, 22 female legislators in KP Assembly, 75 women MPAs in Punjab Assembly and 29 MPAs in Sindh Assembly. Ms. RahilaDurrani and Dr. Taj Meher are the first female Deputy Speakers in the provincial assemblies of Balochistan and KP. Besides, woman Deputy Speaker is serving as second consecutive deputy speaker of Sindh Assembly. In the previous Government, 4 MPAs served as Ministers (13%), 4 were Parliamentary Secretaries and 3 women MPAs chaired standing committees at provincial assembly of Punjab.

115. The total number of women elected in Local Government Election, 2015 in all four provinces and ICT was 23,981. Total women elected in the province of Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa were 7694. In Sindh 4159 women have been elected in the local government elections. Punjab being the most populous province, has 9286 reserved seats for women. The Government of Balochistan has given substantive role to women in local councils. The Balochistan Local Government Act, 2010 provides 33% representation of women in each council.[22] Total Number of Women in all local councils of Balochistan is 2332.

116. Women parliamentarians have played a significant role in raising issues and concerns relating to women at public forums. Their high visibility has an enormous impact on cultural perceptions of women's roles in politics, resulting in an increasing public acceptability and legitimacy. Women Parliamentary Caucus has been very active in presenting and pursuing pro-women legislation in the Parliament.

117. As a result of commitment of women parliamentarians, Pakistan has reported standalone gender based budgetary allocation for the first time in Federal Budget 2016–17.

Article 8: Representation Abroad

118. Recruitment through Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC) have 10 percent quota reserved for all service groups. Besides, there are also special quotas for candidates from remote areas including rural Sindh, Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Tribal areas, and GB for both women and men candidates.

119. First ever woman Foreign Secretary has been appointed. Similarly, Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York, to the European Union in Brussels are also women e.g. the top 5 multilateral stations were headed by women at the same time (2015–2017). They were not posted there because they were women per se. They were posted because of merit, that is gender-blind.

120. Currently 8 women ambassadors and 39 female officers are serving in Pakistan's Missions abroad. Total number of women Ambassadors is 10 who have served since 2013. In addition 13 women officers from various government departments are also serving in Pakistan Missions abroad in different capacities.

121. Besides, a number of Pakistani women have served in treaty bodies. In 2013–14 Late Ms. Asma Jahangir was nominated to advise the UN on alleged human rights violations committed during the final stages of armed conflict in Sri Lanka. In 2016, Ms. Fiza Farhan was elected as a member of the first ever High Level Panel of the UN Secretary General on Women's Economic Empowerment. Dr. Sania Nishter, an acclaimed public health expert, was nominated as Pakistan's candidate contesting for the post of Director General World Health Organization (WHO). Dr. Shamshad Akhtar (Under Secretary General and Executive Secretary of UNESCAP), Razia Bilgrami (Senior Executive UNDP Thailand). Lubna Baqi (Deputy Director, UN Population Fund (UNFPA) and Aban Marker (Regional Director IUCN) are some women holding prominent international positions abroad.

Article 9: Nationality

122. The Constitution of Pakistan guarantees the same right of citizenship to women as men and marriage to a non-Pakistani citizen neither affects a woman's nationality nor requires her to adopt the citizenship of her non-Pakistani husband. The children of a Pakistani woman married to a non-Pakistani are citizens of Pakistan.

[22] Section 12(1) Balochistan Local Government Act 2010.

Article 10: Equal Rights to all aspects of Education

123. Article 25-A of the Constitution re-affirms the Right to Education and emphasises that the State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of five to sixteen years in such manner as may be determined by law.

124. The Sindh Education Policy, 2016 emphasizes strengthening education management and governance, enhancing gender equity, public private partnerships, social cohesion, education in emergencies as well as enhancing use of ICT for learning and monitoring. Similarly, Sindh Free & Compulsory Education Act, 2013 states that no child shall be liable to pay any kind of fee and private schools shall also provide free education to at least 10% of their students. Rules to implement the Act have been notified and inspection committees at regional and divisional level for inspection/ registration of private institutions have also been constituted.

125. The Punjab Free and Compulsory Education Act 2014 also mandate that 10% of students in private schools will include disadvantaged children who will be provided free and compulsory education.

126. The Balochistan Education Management Information System (EMIS) launched school census in 2014. It recorded human resources, profile of teachers and students, enrollment and dropout rates, tracking migration of students along with reasons for migration from one school to another. Balochistan has also refurbished educational facilities. The refurbishing includes provision of clean drinking water, toilets, restoration of electricity, provision of furniture and necessary infrastructure. Moreover, 10,000 primary schools have been declared as 'gender free' as against 2500 schools that were girl's primary schools. About 8000 teachers have been trained in basic subjects including English, Mathematics, and Science in local languages and 600 education officers/managers are also being trained in accounting and administrative skills.

127. Out of 27,506 schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 39% schools are for females. Education Sector Reform Unit (ESRU). KP has brought numerous reforms to attract female teachers and to increase enrollment ratio of female students in far-flung areas.

128. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa spent Rs. 96,312.54 million i.e 24.43% of the total budget on school education during financial year 2014–15. Similarly, for the financial year 2015–16, Rs. 104,252.5 million were allocated. Besides, the total budget for Higher Education for the financial year 2014–15 was Rs. 11,964.237 million and for the financial year 2015–16, Rs. 15,468.213 million were allocated.

129. Innovative Teacher Incentive Program of KP encourages teachers impacting learning outcomes as well as retention of children in public sector schools. Since the fiscal year 2015–16, the best performing principals and teachers of government schools have received Rs. 100,000 and Rs. 50,000 respectively as an award for exceptional performance. Girls Community Schools (GCSs) program serve out-of-school children whose families are not able or willing to send their daughters to unfamiliar, distant government schools. These schools are located within the community and teachers are sourced from respected members of the local community who follows the primary school curriculum. Government provides free textbooks, teaching resources, and teachers' salaries.

130. Since 2014–15, the Government of KP launched an enrolment campaign to encourage maximum number of out-of-school children to enrolled in schools before commencement of new sessions in April annually. Similarly, 500 ECCE Centers were established in primary schools, 170 IT-laboratories became operational and specialized teachers were recruited through testing service to maintain transparency.

131. The Government of KP disbursed about Rs. 1,100 million @ Rs. 200/ month among 442,030 girls students in 2014–15 which resulted in an increased enrolment of girls by 2%. During the fiscal year 2015–16, allocation was increased and stipend was disbursed among 465,000 girl students. Free textbooks costing Rs. 2.05 billion were distributed among 5,415,662 students. Similarly, 3000 scholarships were given to girls' students of Torghar and Kohistan districts. Stoori Da Pakhtunkhwa Scholarships were awarded to 1,226 students of Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSSC). Policy measures have also been taken to give special incentives to female teachers in disadvantaged districts.

132. The Punjab Government earmarked 60% of Punjab Education Sector Reforms Program (PESRP) for provision of missing facilities for girls' schools, including toilet, boundary walls. Free text books are being provided in public schools, while curricula are being revised to include gender equality and human rights. About 70% jobs in primary education have been allocated to female teachers.[23] 362 girls' colleges and universities are currently registered with the Higher Education Department, Punjab. About 20,181 institutions for non-formal education have been established across Punjab and 2,124,300 students study in these centres, 90% of the teachers and more than 50% of students in these institutes are female.

133. A special scheme 'Parrho Punjab Barrho Punjab', ensures 100% enrolment of children by providing stipend of Rs. 1000/- per month to girl students. Similarly, brick kiln workers are given monthly stipends of Rs. 1000/- per month per child, and Rs. 2000/- per child at the time of admission.

134. The Punjab Education Sector Reform Programme also offers stipends to girls from grades (6–10) to improve enrolment, retention and reduce gender disparity. During FY 2013–14, the program distributed stipends worth Rs.1.5 billion among 411,000 girls in 16 districts of Punjab. Similarly, during FY 2014–15, the stipends support was extended to 659 rural government schools. Punjab has 414,000 female students in colleges, maintaining Gender Parity Ratio at 1.86. Punjab Education Endowment Fund awarded 13,175 scholarships to girls in 2014 and scholarships for 25,217 girls are currently in process.[24]

135. Punjab Education Foundation (PEF) provides incentives to low income students and teachers. Currently, the PEF operates network of 6,500 partner schools and manages 461 schools for girls where 825,854 girls (45% of total beneficiaries) are enrolled. The Foundation also runs a Free Voucher scheme to provide scholarships for students in private schools. To date, the PEF has provided scholarships to 673,000 girls across Punjab.

136. Government In-Service Training College for the Teachers of Disabled Children has been established in Lahore to enhance teacher's capacity in teaching. 1,793 female teachers have received training in 100 training courses. 26 special/disabled female at primary level, 27 special/disabled female at Middle level have been awarded scholarships of 200 Rupees per month during the year 2013–16.

137. The Government of Sindh disbursed 7.5 million text books from class 1–12 and provided stipend to 420,000 girls. The amount was increased from Rs.1000 to Rs. 2500 and Rs 2400 to Rs.3500 at DSP Talukas. The 23rd Annual School Census was completed in 12 Districts for which Smart Phone Based Monitoring and Data Collection has been launched.

[23] Primary Education Department currently has 46% females employed.

[24] Scholarships provided by the Punjab Educational Endowment Fund were equivalent to Rs. 256.5 million in 2014 and Rs. 774.5 million in 2015–16.

138. Under the Sindh Elementary Teacher Training Programme, 22,745 teachers have been trained, 1641 scholarships were awarded and Rs. 104.342 million spent on purchase of Computer Labs, Generators, transport, Furniture & Fixtures for 22 GECEs, GCEs and DETRECs.

139. The Sindh Education Foundation (SEF) has extended financial and technical support to 2200 educational institutions including 1685 new and existing private schools, 250 community schools, 150 Government schools, 13 Women's Literacy and Empowerment Centers, one Child Development Center and a school in jail at Sukkur. The estimated student enrollment stands at 288,701 with 7869 teachers employed in different programs of the Foundation. Moreover, hostel and transport facility to female students is being provided in women colleges and universities.

140. Special security arrangements have been made to protect schools from terrorist attacks all over the Pakistan. Necessary measures include Installation/employment of barbed wires on the boundary walls, deployment of special Security guards, maintenance of movement register, closing of main entry gate, Installation of CCTV cameras and building of boundary walls.

141. Waseela-e-Taleem program aims to encourage BISP beneficiary families with children in the age group of 5 to 12 years, to send their out of school children to schools for Primary Education, in return for cash transfers with the long-term prospects of human capital formation. Government is providing stipends of Rs.250 per child per month. In total stipend, worth Rs.2.4 billion has been disbursed to these poor families against enrolment of 1.3 million children in primary schools.

142. Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU), Islamabad provides distant education facility to women all over Pakistan who due to any reason are unable to attend regular schools and colleges. Total numbers of 740,603 women have been enrolled during Year 2013–16. The detailed education statistics relating to the Federal government and Provincial governments are provided in Annexure V.

Article 11: Employment

143. The ratio of women employed in many male-dominated spheres including energy department, public health engineering, fisheries as well labour and manpower has increased. Facilities for women such as separate washrooms and prayer rooms, maternity and paternity leave, financial assistance to working women residing in hotels are some of the initiatives taken to increase women labour force participation across Pakistan. Moreover, working women hostels and day care facilities have been set-up in major cities to provide accommodation and to facilitate working women from remote areas of the country. MOHR itself runs a hostel and a day care centre to facilitate working women.

144. Two Vocational Training Centres (VTCDs) at Quetta and Khuzdar and 32 Training and Rehabilitation (T&R) centres across Balochistan provides vocational training/skill development to both men and women. Around 80 women get enrolled annually and around 960 women have already been trained. 5% quota for women is optimally complied with. Government has also created special position of female labour inspectors to resolve issues of women working at industries. Similarly, Gender Coordination Forum (GCF) ensures National level coordination on all planned interventions and to ensure alignment of labour and women development policies.

145. In KP, female employment was generally concentrated in agriculture, community and domestic services. During 2013–17, however, total 125 officers in Provincial Management Service and 18 officers were recruited against reserved quota in KP. Programs for women entrepreneurs and home based workers are also being run

to provide training and guidance on how to market their product at national and international level.

146. Punjab observes 15% employment quota since 2012 along with three-year age relaxation[25] for women. The Government has included female judges in the lower and superior judiciary. Out of 1872 judges in Punjab, 30 women are serving as Additional District and Sessions Judges, 225 as Civil Judges, 2 as District and Sessions Judges, 2 as Senior Civil Judges and 3 at Lahore High Court.

147. Women officers are now included in recruitment committees. Almost 25,000 spaces for woman in decision making positions have been created because of amendments in 66 laws under the Punjab Fair Representation of Women Act, 2014. Punjab Working Women Endowment Fund (PWEF) provides affordable accommodation voucher scheme to provide low cost accommodation to low income working women. Similarly, to track female workforce in the informal sector, Punjab Employees Social Security Institution (PESSI) has issued cards to female workers. About 37,968 women are registered as secured persons in PESSI.

148. Punjab Chief Minister's Self-employment Scheme amounting to Rs. 88,51,54,172 has facilitated 41% women in extending interest free loans to impoverished borrowers including women. The scheme is designed to support entrepreneurship and alleviate poverty amongst women. Up to July 2016, 139,087 women beneficiaries have been given interest free loans.

149. Punjab domestic Workers' Policy 2015 aims to recognize the domestic workers through legislative and administrative actions, to develop framework focused on their needs. Under the scheme "domestic workers Training Program", a sum of Rs. 20.00 million was spent for their training at three major cities i.e. Lahore, Faisalabad and Multan. Similarly, Punjab Home Based Workers Policy 2017 also aims to recognize and support HBWs through legislation and administrative action.

150. Punjab Small Industries Corporation (PSIC) has established Handicraft Development Centers (HDCs) to provide training and marketing opportunities on handicrafts particularly textile and embroidery.[26] Chief Minister's Special Relief Fund has accommodated widows of borrowers and Rs. 1,972,200/- has been paid on their behalf.

151. The Government of Sindh has increased reserved women quota for jobs in the public sector to 15% in addition to the open merit seats. Skill training programs have been designed to have temporary employment. Income generation trainings have been given to 5000 youth including female in the field of entrepreneurship, secretarial Skill Development, Business Management, beautician and Office Management.

152. The WDD Sindh has also launched a "Business Assets Creation for Revolving Fund (Loan Project)" at a cost of Rs.131.560 million. The Project provides interest-free loans to help women artisans @ Rs.50,000/- payable in 36 easy installments after a rebate period of 3 months. Furthermore, WDD Sindh provides day care centers and has given 3 months 'Baby Child-Care Training' in child growth, nutrition and, health care education to women and girls in all District of Sindh. The project encourages women/girls to set up their own Day care center in homes. During the training, trainees are provided Rs 1500/- per month stipend. Total Cost of the Project is Rs 32.017 million.

[25] Notification No. SOR-I (S&GAD) 9-36/81 dated 21-05-2012.

[26] PSIC's 2 recently completed projects which focused on women's empowerment are (i) the Empowerment of female artisan of tribal areas (implemented in D.G Khan and Rajanpur); and (ii) Empowering artisans through Development of Crafts and Entrepreneurship Skills (implemented in Bahawalnagar and Cholistan).

Article 12: Health

153. Health is a devolved subject after the 18th Constitutional Amendment. At the national level, the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulation and Coordination is responsible for gathering information, regulation, coordination and compliance of international agreements related to health. National Health Vision (NHV) developed in consultation with provincial governments provides a road map to improve the health of all Pakistanis particularly women and children. It has six thematic areas focusing on improving access and quality of (Maternal, Neo-natal and Child Health) MNCH community based primary care services and investing in nutrition with special focus on adolescent, girls, mothers and children. Free medical care and medicines for all diseases are provided to all patients including women in all government hospitals including Basic Health Units (BHUs). Moreover, Facilities of family planning advice and services, mother and child health care (MCH), medical care for general ailment, midwifery services and social education are provided to women without discrimination. The detailed indicators and statistics on health and nutrition are provided in Annexure VI.

154. Keeping in view the cultural and social norms, Lady Health Workers (LHWs), Community Midwife Cadre, Family Health Worker, and Community Health Volunteers provide health services at the door step. Female Wards have also been established and female staff has been appointed to take care of female patients. One year basic training is imparted to LHWs and 18 months pre-service training is given to Community midwife cadre. Besides, family welfare workers also receive training on counseling and provision of family planning services.

155. Various dedicated Projects and Programs for Mother and Child care are underway at national and provincial level to enhance the coverage and integration of four vertical programs inter alia, Mother Neo-natal & Child Health Program, Lady Health Workers Program, Expanded Program of Immunization and Nutritional Programs.

156. Mother and Child Health has remained under focus in KP through mega-projects like MNCH, Lady Health Worker's program, expanded Program of Immunization, HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis Control Program. The government provides Technical Education to female in 3 Regional Training Institutes (RTIs) and at RHS-Training Center, Peshawar. Apart from a full-fledged Girls Medical College, there are multiple nursing and Lady Health Visitors (LHVs) schools. During 2015, 1,083 female nurses were recruited on regular basis in addition, 875 nurses on ad-hoc basis in 2016. The Government has expanded and regularized LHW Program through LHW Program and Employees Act 2014. Rs. 212 million were spent in D.I.Khan, Buner, LakkiMarwat, Karak, Nowshera and Haripur in up scaling phase to improve mother and child specific indicators, ante-natal care and immunization. Government has allocated an amount of Rs. 22.807, 25.237 and 21.576 Million during 2013–14, 2014–15 and 2015–16 respectively for health sector.

157. The KP Chief Minister's special health initiatives continue to support mother and child health requirements through cash in the province. Separate Women & Children hospitals in Charsadda, Mardan and Peshawar have been established. Minimum Health Services Deliver Package (MHSDP) is being implemented in 08 districts focused on Maternal, Newborn and Child health. Moreover, Provincial Health & Nutrition Program (PHNP), Immunization of pregnant women, Maternity benefits and the right of working women are major initiatives of Government. Under the MNCH/Reproductive Health Program, 05 new-born units have been established at District Headquarter Hospital (DHQ) at D.I.Khan, Swat, Malakand, Bannu, and Karak while 02 new-born units at DHQ Hospital in Upper Dir and Chitral are in process. Moreover, 1,440 CMWs have been deployed to increase child delivery by

Skilled Birth Attendants. Similarly, 42 ENC trainings have been imparted and 1,008 Health Care Providers (HCPs) were trained.

158. The Government of Punjab scaled up the Chief Minister's Health Initiative for Attainment and Realization of MDGs (CHARM program) across Punjab in 2012 which include opening of 24/7 Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care (EmONC) services at 700 Basic Health Units (BHU), Rural Health Centers (RHC), Tehsil and District Headquarters. 193 ambulances to transport pregnant women to hospitals are also being purchased. Similarly, Health Insurance policy has been executed in 4 districts.

159. Currently, 2,503 Basic Health Units, 1,099 free dispensaries, 28 District Headquarter Hospitals, 288 mother and child health centers, 313 rural health centers, 34 specialized hospitals, 118 Tehsil Head Quarter hospitals and 90 teaching health facilities are available at Punjab.

160. The Government of Punjab has also employed 45,486 lady health workers and 1,544 lady health visitors. Moreover, 1,833 Family Welfare Centers, 132 Family Health Clinics and 115 Mobile Health Units across Punjab cater reproductive health problems of women who reside in remote and inaccessible areas. Since 2012, the number of children born underweight annually has decreased from 22,607 to 15,159. Similarly, the number of children born with anemia or iron deficiencies has reduced from 584,644 in 2012 to 394,031 in 2015 (approximately 33%).

161. One of the most frequently encountered acute reproductive health problems among women include the obstetric fistula, usually a result of early age pregnancies. From 2012 to 2015, 349 women received surgical treatment for obstetric fistulas at Punjab. This number depicts an increase in awareness regarding the fistula and willingness of women to obtain treatment.

162. To gain health benefits associated with sports, modern and adequate sports facilities are available to public like necessary infrastructure, play grounds and training opportunities. The Federal and Provincial Sports Departments provides number of International / National level playing facilities in Sports Complexes having facilities for Cricket, Squash, Swimming Pool and Indoor Games Hall, Football, Athletic, Hockey and Squash etc.

163. Pakistan joined Scaling Up Movement 2013 and the Provincial SUN Secretariat was established in Nutrition Section in Planning & Development Department, Government of Sind in June 2016. Nutrition Support Program in Sindh (NSP) with support of World Bank, costing Rs 4117.9 m has been set up for 9 districts. Following programs have also been undertaken with donor support; UN Maternal and Child Nutrition Stunting Reduction Program, Sindh, Improved Nutrition in Sindh, Accelerated Action Plan on Reduction of Stunting & Malnutrition (AAP) and World Food Program.

164. The Department of Health Sindh has outsourced many facilities to NGOs under Public Private Partnership Node (PP Node). These NGOs have committed to implement Costed Implementation Plan (CIP) on Family Planning. In this regard, Community Midwives of the Department are being focused for trainings in postpartum family planning PPFP and provision of services.

Article 13: Economic and Social Benefits

165. Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) provides a cushion between poverty and effects of inflation. Its budgetary allocation for FY 2016–17 is Rs. 115 billion. Eligible families receive cash payment of RS 1,500/ month. This amount has increased the purchasing power for families earning approximately Rs 5,000 each month by 20%.

166. Waseela-e-Haq, BISP aims to break the vicious cycle of poverty and provides interest free financial assistance to randomly selected beneficiaries. It offered Rs 300,000 long-term interest free financial assistance based on social capital. 41 draws were held and installments worth Rs. 2.2 billion were disbursed to 13,455 beneficiaries while 11,570 beneficiaries started their own businesses.

167. Waseela-e-Rozgar, BISP initiative envisages empowering the female beneficiary to become economically independent through acquiring demand-driven vocational skill and technical education free of cost between the ages of 18–45.

168. Prime Minister's Youth Program includes Interest Free Loans Schemes, Training Scheme, Youth Skills Development Program, Youth Laptop Program and Fee Reimbursement Scheme.

169. Prime Minister's Interest Free Loan Scheme is being implemented in 287 union Councils of 44 districts of Pakistan. Average loan size is Rs. 21,792. 50 % loans are reserved for women and 136,477 women have taken benefit of loan. The scheme has 99% recovery rate from borrowers.

170. Prime Minister's Youth Business Loan provides subsidized financing at 8.0% service charges per annum for nearly 100,000 beneficiaries. It has 50% quota for women borrowers. So far, 15% of the total loans have been disbursed to women entrepreneurs. Till November, 2016, about 8,661 loans amounting to Rs. 8.24 Million have been disbursed and around 1300 women have benefitted under the scheme.

171. Women's financial inclusion is a top priority for State Bank of Pakistan SBP for the next 5 years. According to Access to Finance Survey (A2FFS), 2015, 15 % female had a bank account in 2015 while this ratio was 4 percent in 2008. Women constitute 54 percent of microfinance borrowers and hold major share in the industry's loan portfolio. To create awareness on various refinance schemes offered by SBP, various awareness sessions for women entrepreneurs in association with Women Chambers are being conducted across the country.

172. To empower rural women, the Zarai Taraqiyati Bank has launched agriculture related products/schemes for short & medium terms wherein women were given opportunity to avail loans to participate in promotion and development of agricultural sector. Special Scheme like Khawateen Rozgaar Scheme and other schemes includes Asan Qarza Scheme, Tahafuz-e-Samar Scheme (Dehydration of Fruits & Vegetables), KhushkRatab Scheme (Product for Dehydration of Dates) and Soghat-e-Shireen Scheme etc. have been launched.

173. The Agriculture Development Bank of Pakistan (ADBP) has been supporting women in accessing loans for entrepreneurship in the agriculture sector. Agriculture/entrepreneurship loans were disbursed to 53,888 women from 2014–2016.

174. Zakat is a compulsory levy that plays an important role in assisting the needy, orphans, widows and disabled. In 2014–15 the disbursement of Zakat in the province of Punjab has been Rs. 2.548 billion, Sindh disbursed Rs. 1.053 billion, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa disbursed Rs. 614.12 million, Balochistan disbursed Rs. 227.08 million, Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) disbursed Rs. 154.83 million, Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) disbursed Rs. 117.53 million while Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) disbursed Rs. 62.11 million.

175. During the reporting period an amount of Rs. 15.609 Million was allocated by Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for 125 Industrial Training Centers (ITC's) through which 6,649 women received vocational education. Similarly, Skill Optimization Programme (SOPs) for Home Based Workers has also been launched. Guzara Allowance and Marriage Assistance was provided to deserving females, under

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Zakat &Ushr Act 2011 to around 25,950 women. Similarly, about 42,680 women received health care services and 5,536 women were provided marriage assistance. The Tanzeem-e-Lil-Lissail Wal-Mahroom Scheme (2007–2015) provided stipends to deserving students, skill development trainings to widows and orphans in different fields. The scheme has now been merged with the Deserving Widows and Special Persons Foundation through enactment of the Establishment of Lissail-e-WalMahroom Foundation Act, 2015. The scheme has provided Rs. 500.00 Million as endowment fund for the Foundation.

176. The Government of Punjab in 2015, launched a Gender Sensitive Labor Inspection System (GSIS) on pilot basis to track infrastructure support like toilets, prayer areas, recreation facilities, day care, and other facilities in every registered labor-intensive entity across Punjab.[27]

177. The Government of Punjab' Katchi Abadi scheme covers approximately 110,000 households across Punjab, wherein both husband and wife have equal share in land/plot. Approximately 1684 households have been granted proprietary rights under the scheme. Bank of Punjab has also launched a Women Entrepreneurship Financing Scheme to provide loans to women for commercial ventures. Punjab Vocational Training Council (PVTC) has provided vocational training to 120,000 women, while the Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority (TEVTA) has trained 250 women from minority communities and more than 11,500 other women[28] in tailoring, embroidery, beautician, farming techniques, screen printing etc.[29] Punjab Skills Development Fund (PSDF) initiated skill development schemes for female domestic and unskilled labour. From 2013 to 2016, a total of 41,495 women have been provided vocational, skill development and veterinary care trainings. The Punjab Workers Welfare Board has provided trainings on legal rights, effective communications and maintenance of health and safety in around 40 trainings session to 1000 female domestic and day care workers. Land Records Management Information System (LRMIS) launched in 2016 through its transparent and efficient procedures have enhanced woman's access to land records.

178. Government of Sindh has reviewed Labour Laws to make them gender friendly by inserting clauses of non-discrimination. Major Act includes Sindh Factories Act, 2015, Minimum Wages Act, 2015, Terms and Conditions of Employment Act, 2015, Companies Profit (Worker's Participation) Act, 2015, Occupational Safety and Health Act, 2015 and Workers Welfare Fund Act, 2015 etc.

Article 14: Rural Women

179. Rural women play a significant role in our economy. They are found in many different roles such as taking care of their homes, working in the fields as well as looking after domestic animals. Many of them are involved in making handicrafts and selling them to earn money for their family.

180. The number of women engaged in agriculture is over 6.50 million. Their major source of labor in subsistence agriculture (100%) and are engaged in various aspects of agricultural production, animal husbandry (50%), inland fisheries (90%), food processing (100%) and farm management (70%).

[27] The department has introduced a free helpline 0800-55444 for labor related complaints and queries.

[28] Government of Punjab's achievements with respect to women can be accessed at http://wdd.punjab.gov.pk/system/files/PWEP%202016.pdf.

[29] The types of vocational and skills trainings provided by PVTC can be accessed at http://www.pvtc.gop.pk/Trades/NewTrades.aspx.

181. Though Pakistani rural women are extensively involved in agricultural activities, their roles ranges from managers to landless laborers. In all farm production, women's average contribution is estimated at 55% to 66% of the total labor with percentages, much higher in certain regions.

182. The Trade Development Authority of Pakistan provides a 'women-only' trade platform for rural women to display and sell their products. Some 500 stalls are provided at minimal costs to women entrepreneurs from rural areas in the annual "Wexnet" exhibition which is attended by over 1.5 m visitors daily.

183. The Government of KP initiated project to reduce poverty through Gender mainstreaming by involving poor women in backyard poultry production. Rs. 42.11 million were allocated and 3,200 women have benefited from the scheme. Besides, two year Female Veterinary Assistant Course is being offered at a cost of Rs. 2.581 million and around 70 women have received the training up till now. 13 Livestock Farmer Field Schools (LFFS) have been established at a cost of Rs.0.637 million and 188 females have benefited from this program as yet. Besides, more than 200 sessions on GBV have been conducted to raise awareness about gender equality and women's right at rural and urban areas. Government is also running 117 Industrial Training Centers (ITC's) to provide technical/vocational training on cottage industry.

184. The Government of Punjab has taken an initiative to monitor agricultural growth through field visits, plant clinics, framers' training and redressal of farmers' issues through agricultural technology and input management. By December 2016, poultry and cattle were distributed among 1,499,273 rural women in all 36 districts of Punjab. By December 2015, 3,070 rural women were trained in veterinary and livestock care. Punjab Rural Support Programme (PRSP) has constituted 86,980 community organizations out of which 43% are for women. Out of total credit disbursed by PRSP of Rs. 15.586 Billion, 45 % i.e., Rs. 7.043 billion has been disbursed among women.

Article 15: Equality before the Law

185. Article 25 of the Constitution of Pakistan lays down the principle of equality before the law.

186. The Government of Pakistan introduced amendments in Pakistan Penal Code 1860, Code of Criminal Procedure 1898, and Qanun-e-Shahadat Order 1984 and enacted the Criminal Law (Amendment) (Offences in the name or on pretext of Honour) Act, 2016; and Criminal Laws Amendment (Offences relating to Rape) Act, 2016.

187. The Government intensively reviewed and amended relevant laws to prevent crimes in the name/pretext of honour. Crimes committed in the name of honour now also include hurt and definition of fasaad-fil-arz[30] has also been included for which the sentence is life imprisonment (25 years) [31] which cannot be waived or compounded.[32] By invoking this principle, the law ensures that there is no chance of a murderer committing the offence in the name or pretext of honour, to escape penalty. The Judge has been empowered to determine, beyond doubt, if the offence including murder or hurt inflicted, has been committed in the name of honour. The Court has also been granted the discretion to award a penalty in cases where the right of Qisas

[30] 299 (ee) defines Fasaad-fil-Arz as: "the past conduct of the offender or whether he has any previous conviction or the brutal or shocking manner in which the offence has been committed which is outrageous to the public conscience or if the offencer is considered a potential danger to the community or if the offence has been committed in the name or on the pretext of honour;".

[31] PPC. S. 311.-Ta'zir after waiver or compounding of right of Qisas in Qatl-i-Amd.

[32] PPC. S. 55.

(retribution) has been waived or compounded by the families involved. This is expected to serve as a strong deterrent for committing crimes in the name of honour.

188. The main objective of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, 2016 is to take stringent measures to protect the right of access to justice of victims of rape. One of the most striking provisions added through the amendment is the inclusion of DNA testing as a form of evidence and the provision of free legal aid to the rape victims. Three specific incidents of rape are also made punishable with imprisonment for life (25 years) and fine which includes rape of a minor, person with mental or physical disability, and rape by any public servant. A specific provision has also been introduced with penalty of up to three years and fine to anyone who discloses the identity of the victims by any means.

189. The provisions of Punjab Fair Representation of Women Act 2014 are fully implemented. Punjab first Gender Parity Report, 2016 states that 29% district government offices met the 15% quota requirement for women while 21.5% provincial institutions and bodies met the 15% requirement. 12 Boards, 17 Commit ees and 2 Taskforces across Punjab meet the 33% quota requirement for representation of women. [33] Some 34% district government offices and 33% provincial government offices had at least 1 woman member in their selection and recruitment committees. Furthermore 44,517 women are now serving as office bearers in Executive bodies and trade unions across Punjab. To date, 37 of 153 provincial government departments have also constituted Gender Mainstreaming Committees.

190. To safeguard the rights of female heirs, the Punjab Land Revenue (Amendment) Act 2012 and the Punjab Partition of Immovable Property Act were enacted under which District Committees for Protection of the Rights to Inheritance were constituted to review inheritance mutations. To date, eight delinquent Revenue Officers have been punished[34] and since its establishment till December 2015, a total of 213,350 cases out of 218,772 cases were decided by the Committees. PCSW, Punjab conducted research study[35] and found that 47.6% of all inheritance cases in 2015 were filed by women and a total of 248,017 kanals of land were allotted to women. It was further elaborated that women's right to inheritance was barred due to lack of awareness among women, fake documentation and social as well as family pressure to give up inheritance claim. To raise awareness about inheritance rights, massive media campaign has been launched by provincial Government of Punjab.

191. Punjab Protection of Women against Violence Act, 2016 is a significant achievement which aims to protect women from domestic, sexual, psychological and economic abuse by approaching a Court to obtain Interim, Protection, Residence or Monetary Orders. The government is appointing Women Protection Officers, who will be accessible via telephone 24 /7. Setting up Violence Against Women Centers will be a converging point for all essential services to ensure speedy reporting of crimes, registration of cases, timely medical examinations and collection of forensic and other evidences. The first VAW Center has been established in Multan in March 2017.

192. The Punjab Muslim Family Laws (Amendment) Act, 2015 mandates filling in all provisions of the nikahnama and penalizes persons who are not licensed to solemnize a Nikah. In this regard, trainings of Nikah Registrar are being held by

[33] There are a total of 118 Boards and 340 Committees of government departments across Punjab.

[34] 8 revenue officers punished were from Mianwali (2), Attock (1), Dera Ghazi Khan (1), Jhang (1), Rajanput (1), Rawalpindi (1) and Sahiwal (1).

[35] Evaluating 2015 Legal Reforms related to Land Inheritance and their Impact on Women https://www.dropbox.com/s/8rcehfutvah6tp7/PCSW%20Final%20Report.pdf?dl=0.

PCSW. Penalties for polygamy without permission of the existing wife have been raised.

193. The Punjab Family Courts (Amendment) Act 2015 speeds up litigation and imposes stringent liability upon a defendant for failure to provide maintenance.

Article 16: Marriage and Family Life

194. The National Commission on Rights of the Child 2017 has been established to provide support and protection for children of Pakistan. The Commission will play a major role in policy and legislative initiatives for child welfare and development, including the girl child. ICT child Protection Bill 2017 has been passed by the Standing Committee on Human Rights and is to be presented in parliament shortly.

195. As mentioned in detail at paragraph 46, the landmark Hindu Marriage Act 2017 has been enacted.

196. MOHR is also in the process of finalization of the Christian Marriage and divorce Bills. Numbers of consultation were held with representatives of Christian religious denominations. In amended drafts, age of marriage both for male and female has been proposed to be 18 years. Under the present applicable divorce law, only one ground of divorce is available wherein other grounds have also been proposed.

197. The Government is in process of establishing statutory National Commission for Minorities. In addition, a draft Interfaith Harmony Policy is also under consideration by Council of Common Interests (CII).

198. KP Elimination of the Custom of Ghag Act 2013 prevents forced marriages.

199. The Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Acts have been enacted by Governments of Sindh and Balochistan in 2013 and 2014 respectively for which Rules of Business have also been notified.

200. Under the Punjab Marriage Restraint (Amendment) Act 2015, a Magistrate can conduct a trial upon receipt of complaint regarding child marriage from the Union Council.

201. The Government of Punjab has waived the fee for new and late birth registration and has seen a substantial increase in the number of births registered in 2012 (3,278,988) to the number of births registered in 2014 (4,387,596).

Conclusion

202. Pakistan is a developing country with huge potential which can truly be realized by equal participation and empowerment of women. We are totally cognizant of this fact and therefore, have worked diligently for the promotion and protection of rights of women. With the strong determination of the people of Pakistan and political will, we have been able to cope with most of daunting challenges faced in different areas related to women rights.

203. As a Federation, Pakistan is a family of democracies with functioning democratic institutions at provincial and local levels. We will continue to be guided by our national constitution democratic institutions, free media, independent judiciary and vibrant civil society in our endeavours for the promotion and protection of all human rights especially those related to women.

204. With greater women participation in legislative, executive and judicial areas of the State, women are taking charge to improve the status of women in Pakistan. With

this backdrop, work on improvement of the status of women enjoys societal ownership and political recognition.

205. This report highlights our efforts to follow-up and to implement the recommendations received previously and to fulfil our obligations with regard to CEDAW and other relevant human rights bodies. We are fully committed to the cause of ensuring 'Human Dignity' both nationally and internationally.